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ICC Commissioner Oliva Offers Energy Sector Communications Expertise Through a Partnership Exchange in Indonesia

Chicago, IL...During a Partnership Exchange sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) last week, Illinois Commerce Commissioner (ICC) Sadzi Martha Oliva shared her expertise on conducting effective public information and communications with members of the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) at a four-day event in Jakarta, Indonesia.

“It was an honor to be a part of the partnership agreement initiation. I felt like I was taking part in something truly historic. We had the opportunity to exchange experiences and ideas with public information professionals from other commissions and regulators from Bangladesh. I am hopeful we were able to help BERC improve its governing framework and public communication processes, develop a robust resolution process and strengthen its tariff frameworks. BERC was only recently established in 2004, but it is clear that they are on the right path to establishing good governance in the energy sector and improving the lives of their citizens,” said Oliva.

In addition to welcoming event attendees, Commissioner Oliva was able to share her insights during presentations throughout the week. She offered her perspective as to why public communications are important for a commission and how to establish priorities that will inform and educate the public. Further, she discussed stakeholder engagement successes and challenges in Illinois, and then participated in a roundtable discussion of the topic exploring best practices from the U.S. and Jamaica.

“The ICC engages stakeholders through policy sessions, workshops, and multiple social media channels. Additionally, the ICC’s Consumer Services Division (CSD) counselors serve to educate consumers about utility issues and help resolve customer/utility disputes. Further, consumers can file complaints or comments regarding any case being considered by the Commission at our website,” said Oliva.

Based on the presentations and discussions, participants worked together to formulate a communications plan for BERC that will engage its key participants and inform the wider public.

Commissioner Oliva was the only regulator from the United States to participate in the Partnership Exchange in Indonesia. She was joined by William Edge, Public Information Officer, Georgia Public Service Commission; Andrew Melynkovich, Director of Communications, Kentucky Public Service Commission; and Yvonne Grinam-Nicholson, Director of Consumer & Public Affairs, Jamaica Office of Utility Regulation. The Partnership Program works towards a common goal of improving practices in the electricity sector and fostering long-term sustainable relationships between regulatory agencies in participating countries.

“Interacting with colleagues from across the U.S. and overseas, I learned a great deal, and hope that they learned something as well,” said Oliva. “I expect NARUC members in the future will continue this partnership to assist BERC to implement international best practices and established approaches to complex regulatory issues,” Oliva concluded.

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About the Illinois Commerce Commission

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a quasi-judicial body made up of five Commissioners. Through its Public Utility Program, the Commission oversees the provision of adequate, reliable, efficient and safe utility services at the least possible cost to Illinois citizens served by electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and sewer public utility companies. Through its Transportation Regulatory Program, the Commission oversees public safety and consumer protection programs with regard to intrastate commercial motor carriers of general freight, household goods movers, relocation towers, safety towers, personal property warehouses and repossession agencies. The Commission’s Rail Safety Program also inspects and regulates the general safety of railroad tracks, facilities and equipment in the state.

To learn more about the Commission, its offices and bureaus, click [here](#). If you are a consumer who needs help resolving a utility dispute call 800-524-0795 or file an online complaint [here](#). For a complaint related to transportation, call 217-782-6448.

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